THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Government of India has provided assistance as required by Government of Nepal in dealing with the challenges posed by the Maoist insurgency. Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) has been deployed along the India-Nepal border to strengthen security in the border areas. A network of Institutional dialogue mechanisms with the Government of Nepal has been evolved to discuss cross-border security issues.

**Dismissal of Nepalese Prime Minister**

365. SHRI AMAR SINGH:
SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention have been drawn to the recent development in Nepal where Nepal's King Gyanendra dismissed the Prime Minister and his cabinet and also imposed a state of emergency suspending fundamental rights of its citizens;

(b) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto;

(c) whether it is a fact that a number of political leaders of Nepal have taken refuge in our country; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) and (b) Government of India has expressed grave concern following the dismissal of the multi-party government, declaration of emergency, arrest of political leaders and others and imposition of media censorship in Nepal on February 1, 2005. These developments constitute a serious setback to the cause of democracy and would only benefit the anti-constitutional forces. India has always believed that the challenges being faced by Nepal can be addressed effectively only on the basis of national consensus. In this context, we have called for a return to democratic processes at the earlist. All arrested political leaders, media personnel, intellectuals and human rights activists should be released immediately and allowed to exercise their Constitutional rights. On its

part, India will continue to support all efforts for the restoration of political stability and economic prosperity in Nepal.

(c) and (d) Government of India is aware that several Nepalese political leaders have crossed over to India following the imposition of emergency in that country. India and Nepal share an open border and visa-free movement regime. The Nepalese political leaders are allowed to carry out activities in accordance with our laws.

**Restoration of democracy in Nepal**

366. SHRI SHAHID SIDDIQUI:
SHRI E.M. SUDARSANA NATCHIAPPAN:
DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) Government's position regarding the development in Nepal;

(b) whether Government are thinking of contributing in any manner in the restoration of democracy in Nepal;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) to (d) Government of India has expressed grave concern following the dissmissal of the multi-party government, declaration of emergency, arrest of political leaders and others and imposition of media censorship in Nepal on February 1, 2005. These developments constitute a serious setback to the cause of democracy and would only benefit the anti-constitutional forces. India has always belived that the challenges being faced by Nepal can be addressed effectively only on the basis of national consensus. In this context, we have called for a return to democratic processes at the earliest. All arrested political leaders, media personnel, intellectuals and human rights activists should be released immediately and allowed to exercise their Constitutional rights. On its part, India will continue to support all efforts for the restoration of political stability and economic prosperity in Nepal.